

February 8, 2000

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 8, 2000

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent Monday, January 31, 2000 through Wednesday February 2, 2000, and as a result, missed rollcall votes 2 through 7. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote 2, "yes" on rollcall vote 3, "yes" on rollcall vote 4, "yes" on rollcall vote 5, "yes" on rollcall vote 6, and "no" on rollcall vote 7.

HONORING WYCKOFF HEIGHTS
MEDICAL CENTER FOR ITS DEDICATED SERVICE TO BROOKLYN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 8, 2000

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the unwavering service and dedication of the administrators, physicians, nurses and other staff of Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, a renowned 350-bed hospital within Brooklyn's 10th Congressional District. For over 100 years, this facility has served the residents of Brooklyn with pride.

I also ask that we take a moment out of our daily business to commend Wyckoff for its extraordinary work throughout the years, and for going that extra mile this month by sponsoring the 1st annual men's health symposium. This symposium entitled "The First Step of Empowerment is Taking Care of Your Health" will be held on Monday, February 14, 2000, and will take the extraordinary step of focusing on men's health in Brooklyn, and throughout this nation.

Although there are numerous individuals who have worked to create this program, I want to applaud the efforts of four individuals: Dominick Gio, president & CEO; Pradeep Chandra, MD, chairman, Internal Medicine; Nirmal Matto, MD, senior vice president, Medical Affairs/director of Nephrology; and William Green, vice president, Ambulatory Services. They each have worked tirelessly to ensure that Wyckoff does not lose the focus of its mission: to provide excellence in care through prevention, education and treatment. In today's health care environment, their unwavering energy and steadfast determination toward improving our health care delivery system is truly a beacon of hope for the future.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my esteemed colleagues join me in commending the work of Wyckoff Heights Medical Center and its dedicated staff. It is truly a shining star in Brooklyn!

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

THE STATE CHILDREN'S HEALTH
INSURANCE PROGRAM INTEGRITY
ACT OF 2000

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 8, 2000

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I join today with Rep. SHERROD BROWN, the ranking Democrat on the Commerce Health Subcommittee, and my California colleagues Representatives HENRY WAXMAN, GEORGE MILLER, BOB MATSUI, ANNA ESHOO, TOM LANTOS, XAVIER BECERRA and LYNN WOOLSEY to introduce the State Children's Health Insurance Program Integrity Act of 2000.

This legislation would prohibit any State Children's Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP) from allowing a health plan to simultaneously administer and participate in the state plan. While it is simply a technical correction to S-CHIP, it is important technical correction that would eliminate a very real potential for conflict of interest problems caused by health plans playing dual roles in state programs.

The need for this legislation was first brought to our attention in 1998 when California initially granted a contract to a participating health plan to also administer the state CHIP plan. In fact, that health plan withdrew its application and the State went with a non-health plan alternative administrator.

We are now reintroducing the bill and urging its swift passage because it may soon be an issue in California again and could easily become an issue elsewhere since there is nothing in federal law that prohibits states from granting such contracts. The second administrative vendor contract will be negotiated in California later this year. Without Congressional action on this issue, it is likely that there will once again be competition among participating health plans to obtain the vendor contract.

To further describe the seriousness of this conflict of interest, under California's program the administrative vendor performs a wide variety of functions including: providing trained staff on the program's toll free telephone lines, making eligibility determinations and redeterminations, collecting premiums, enrolling and disenrolling members, transmitting enrollment information and updates to participating health plans, administering the annual open enrollment process, and the list goes on and on. These are clearly functions over which a participating health plan has tremendous interest and will certainly attempt to influence in any system.

Clearly, allowing plans to play both roles creates an inherent bias. And, at a time when there are numerous alternatives to selecting a health plan with a financial interest in that market, it is a bias that can be easily avoided.

Further evidence that our legislation has real merit can be found in another provision of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 (BBA) which included the S-CHIP program. The BBA allows state Medicaid programs to choose private enrollment brokers to handle the day-to-day enrollment functions of their Medicaid programs. However, in allowing these enrollment brokers, the law clearly stipulates that the en-

rollment broker be free of any conflicts of interest. Specifically, the law requires that, "The broker is independent of any such entity and of any health care providers (whether or not any such provider participates in the State plan under this title) that provide coverage of services in the same State in which the broker is conducting enrollment activities."

Our legislation would apply the same conflict-of-interest standard that exists in the Medicaid enrollment broker law to the S-CHIP law.

This is an important bill that would protect the integrity of S-CHIP programs across the country. We look forward to working with our colleagues for passage of the State Children's Health Insurance Program Integrity Act this year.

THE JOSEPH ILETO POST OFFICE
(H.R. 3189)

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 8, 2000

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to inform my fellow colleagues that H.R. 3189, the Joseph Iletto Post Office in Chino Hills, California, has the support of the California congressional delegation.

Today, I am submitting the names of 19 California Members who recently agreed to support my legislation which will name the soon-to-completed U.S. Post Office in Chino Hills, CA after Mr. Joseph Iletto. These 19 names will be added to the 33 Members of the California delegation who support passage of the Joseph Iletto Post Office. H.R. 3189 passed the House of Representatives on November 8, 1999 by voice vote and currently awaits action in the U.S. Senate.

You may remember that Mr. Iletto, a resident of Chino Hills, was the postal employee who was murdered on August 10, 1999 by Buford Furrow, the gunman who shot and wounded five children and employees at the North Valley Jewish Community Center (in suburban Los Angeles).

At the time of H.R. 3189's passage, I was listed as the only sponsor of the bill. The Postal Subcommittee of the House Government Reform Committee allowed me to introduce H.R. 3189 with the understanding that I would need to seek additional support within the California delegation. Even though my California colleagues will not be listed as cosponsors of H.R. 3189, they have graciously agreed to be listed as supporters.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, please add the following 19 Members as supporters of H.R. 3189:

Representative WALLY HERGER, Representative DOUG OSE, Representative LYNN WOOLSEY, Representative GEORGE MILLER, Representative BARBARA LEE, Representative ELLEN TAUSCHER, Representative RICHARD POMBO, Representative TOM CAMPBELL, Representative ZOE LOFGREN, Representative GARY CONDIT, Representative GEORGE RADANOVICH, Representative CALVIN DOOLEY, Representative BILL THOMAS, Representative XAVIER BECERRA, Representative LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, Representative GRACE